REMARKS

In the Office Action dated December 10, 2002, claims 1-4, 8, 19-24, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over DeSimone (U.S. Patent No. 6,212,548); claims 5 and 6 were rejected under § 103 over DeSimone in view of Ogle (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,604); claims 7 and 29 were rejected under § 103 over DeSimone in view of Ishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,602); and claims 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, and 42 were rejected under § 103 over DeSimone in view of Busey (U.S. Patent No. 5,764,916).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the server in a first community *associated with a first service provider* and a server in a second community *associated with a second, different service provider*. Although words have been added to this claim, the scope of claim 1 remains unchanged, since the term "community" implies that there is a service provider associated with that community. Therefore, in prior claim 1, the recitation of two communities indicated that there are two different service providers associated with the two different communities. *See also* independent claim 19 (reciting "each community associated with a different service provider"); independent claim 20 (reciting "each community associated with a different service provider"); independent claim 31 (reciting "each community associated with a different service provider").

In the present Office Action, the Examiner stated that a community is represented by a server and its set of users, citing to column 3, line 64 through column 4, line 8, and column 5, lines 9-11 of DeSimone. *See* 12/10/02 Office Action at 12. However, the Office Action does not point to any teaching within DeSimone of multiple communities associated with different service providers. The only reference to "service provider" in DeSimone is found in column 7, at line 53, which mentions *one* service provider or operator of chat server(s). However, there is no mention within DeSimone of servers in different communities associated with different service providers. Therefore, DeSimone *does not* anticipate each of the independent claims of the present application.

Ogle was also cited against dependent claims 5 and 6. Note that Figure 4 of Ogle shows one instant messaging system 403, not plural servers of communities associated

with different service providers. Therefore, Ogle does not suggest a modification of DeSimone that would achieve the claimed subject matter.

The other cited references, Ishikawa and Busey, also do not teach or suggest a modification of DeSimone that would provide the claimed subject matter.

For the foregoing reasons, all claims are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (NRT.0010US).

Respectfully submitted,

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